



Committee on Homeland Security

Democrats
Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member

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*Contact: Nadra Harrison
202.226.2616*

CONGRESSMAN THOMPSON QUESTIONS NO-BID CONTRACT TO COLLEGE WITH CLOSE TIES TO FORMER SECRETARY RIDGE

March 18, 2005, Washington, DC — Congressman Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member of the House Homeland Security Committee, sent the attached letter today regarding assertions that the Department of Homeland Security granted a no-bid contract to train intelligence analysts to Mercyhurst College, an Erie, Pennsylvania college with close ties to former Secretary Tom Ridge.

“The news that a no-bid contract has been given by the Department to a college who is naming a building after Mr. Ridge and whose chairperson once served as a top political supporter certainly raises eyebrows. The Department cannot play patronage games when America’s security is in question. We will hold it accountable,” said Congressman Thompson.

“When it comes to defending our homeland, it is important to have fair and open competition to ensure that all schools – whether big or small – have the opportunity to compete. I request that the Department provide information immediately on this contract. The Committee will be watching the Department closely to ensure that opportunity triumphs over political favoritism.”

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